

Rotherham Community Options Project Taster Programme



The project

The project is a partnership between social enterprise Community Catalysts and Rotherham Council. It aims to develop connections between adults with a learning disability and their local community. Part of the project is the Taster Programme that gives people who attend a Rotherham day centre, the opportunity to try or 'taste' great local community activities. Key to success is that people are supported to 'navigate' their way through the programme by someone who works at the day centre and knows them well.

Taster Session Information	Total
Taster sessions completed	21
Different options accessed	14
Participants	37 (many have done several)
Individual experiences	101
Taster sessions that have been cancelled having been arranged	10
Staff (navigators) involved	6

Taster Programme Update



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The first taster sessions

The first sessions are now underway and what a great start it has been! Trailblazers were John and Leanne from Oaks day centre who went with Navigators Debbie and Richard to participate in the Open Minds Theatre Company - 'Life Act' drama group. Everyone travelled together on public transport to visit the drama group at their ROAR Art Space venue for the first time.

They were all welcomed by a group of 30 people and took part in a variety of creative activities and exercises.



Life Act has performed to high acclaim across Rotherham. It's members help run and devise all performances, which are mainly based on personal experiences and issues that affect them.

Feedback

Leanne and John said they really enjoyed trying something new and would like to try other new activities.

They were both very complimentary about the 'Life Act' group and the fact that everyone has a chance to get involved. John said that he liked the entire session and felt fine going somewhere new. He also said he was glad to have had the Navigators to support him as he probably wouldn't have gone on his own



The people coming along to the taster sessions have been a real pleasure to work with. Creating theatre and music with new people has been really fun for all of our members - especially as we all like meeting new actors and musicians. With more people coming to the classes now, we may have to start a new group to be able to meet demand!

Amy from Life Act

Navigators Debbie and Richard said they enjoyed the experience and the staff at 'Life Act' were really good, very welcoming and made an extra effort to welcome new people to the group. They felt that the session was very well pitched, friendly and everyone enjoyed it. Richard also described how he liked the challenge, using his skills and stretching himself as a worker through this experience.

Charlie's Story

Charlie has a passion for beauty therapy and has achieved several therapy qualifications. She offers many different treatments including manicures, pedicures and massage.

Charlie is working with Community Catalysts and Speak Up to turn her passion into her own business.



Charlie

'I looked for a salon job and nobody would take me on or give me a chance because of my disability, even though I am hard working. Therefore I thought I might as well set up my own business'.

Charlie is already offering treatments to friends, family and a local carers group. She has also recently held her first taster session in which she invited people from Oaks day centre to try her therapies. This was a resounding success as everyone really enjoyed the session and remarked on Charlie's excellent work.

- Charlie will soon be offering her therapies to more people and is working on developing her flyer and a price list.
- Charlie is getting more interest and customers all the time.
- Her success is because of her hard work and it is also a great example of what is possible when someone is supported to focus on what they are good at.

Alex's Story*

Alex has a lot of skills and interests and so they have been a regular of the Taster Programme, trying a range of activities. Alex participated in a musical group, sports sessions and a drama group. The diversity of these activities shows Alex's enthusiasm for new things and also the great variety of groups based across Rotherham. The tasters also represented an opportunity for Alex and their friends to meet new people.

Alex had a great time and was keen to offer us and the group leaders their positive feedback. Alex has agreed to share their experiences at an upcoming event.

Feedback

Musical group

Alex said they loved it and would like to go again.

Name (navigator) said it was a great group and ideal for Alex as they had a love of music.

Sports group

A talked about how much they enjoyed the session and the high quality of the tutor. The Navigator described how Alex got really involved in the activities.

Drama group

Alex again said how much they had enjoyed the activities.

The Navigator said Alex really loved it and got to catch up with old friends. A felt so comfortable they did an individual performance.

Billie and Charlie Story*



Billie and Charlie went to a gardening/horticultural group with navigators. Billie and Navigator used public transport to get to and from the group and Charlie 'made a day of it' by spending the morning before the session shopping with Navigator.

All 4 people enjoyed seeing the facilities and activities on offer. These included woodwork, gardening and a space for socialising. This is a good example of people getting support in ways that suit them and then using it to access an activity that interests them.

Feedback

The gardening group is open to everyone and the Navigators remarked on how much Billie and Charlie enjoyed meeting and speaking to the other locals accessing the group.

All 4 people commented on how much they enjoyed the group, how welcoming it was and that the groups coordinator Name was great. Both Billie and Charlie said that they would like to go again.

Both Navigators said it was clear how much Billie and Charlie enjoyed trying something new, in a new environment. Charlie's family member called to thank the centre for giving their family member the opportunity. Family member said:

*Fictional names have been used to ensure anonymity

Frankie and Gabriel's Story*



Frankie and Gabriel both have lots of skills and interests which meant they were keen to do a number of different 'taster' activities.

On one day they learnt to drive a barge in the morning, had lunch and then went on to try basketball in the evening! This is a great example of 2 friends sharing support and also shows how different activities can be combined to create a full and fun day that leads to great outcomes.

Frankie and Gabriel also had a try at a musical group, sports group and drama group . Showing that Rotherham has a lot to offer, whatever your interests.

Feedback

Frankie said that they loved the activities and would like to do many of them again. They also talked about how much they enjoyed seeing old friends at one of the groups.

Navigator described how well Frankie took to everything, fitted in with each group and increased their confidence, even performing a solo song. Gabriel also described how they had really enjoyed the activities and would like to go again. The navigator commented that they really got stuck in to each activity.

*Fictional names have been used to ensure anonymity

Transitions Case Study*

Person Profile

Morgan is 18 years old and has a global developmental delay.

They were a Looked After Child and in a long term foster placement which has been converted to shared lives placement in Rotherham within a family setting.

By being part of a Shared Lives offer this enables Morgan to be involved in normal family life: for example, shopping at the local supermarket, being part of family routine and focussing on what they enjoy and developing life skills which will enable future independent living.

About Shared Lives

Shared Lives allows adults to live or spend time with carers and their families - as valued members of their own communities.

Older people and adults with disabilities receive tailored support. This helps them to live as independently and safely as possible.

Shared Lives offers:

Long term accommodation and support in the carer's home

Short break respite care in the carer's home

Day time support and social activities using the carer's home as a base

Person centred planning approach

Morgan has expressed a wish to explore the possibility of returning to their birth family and their shared lives carers are supporting them and their birth family to consider this option.

Morgan's birth father also cares for their birth mother who also has additional support needs. Due to this longer term planning is being undertaken to explore other accommodation options for Morgan which will meet their wishes and support independent living. One of the options that are being looked at is Supported Living. This would enable Morgan to live independently in the community with the required support and enable Morgan to have their own front door and circles of friends and support.

Both shared lives family and birth family are supporting Morgan with their aspiration and both families plan to take a role in their future.

Morgan is in full time education until July 2018 and is hoping to continue education and go to college in September.

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Transitions Case Study*



Person Profile

Kennedy is 19 years old and has a learning disability.

Kennedy was a Looked After Child and was with long term foster parents in Hull. Kennedy considered remaining in Hull and the placement being converted to Shared Lives.

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Person centred planning approach

Through conversations and looking at what Kennedy's aspirations and wishes were, it was decided that Kennedy would like to return back to Rotherham to live back with their birth Father and partner.

The transition from Hull to Rotherham has been successful and Kennedy also has regular contact with their birth mother and siblings.

Conversations around Kennedy's ambitions were also explored as part of the move back to Rotherham and whilst Kennedy made the choice not to continue in education they wished to look at work options.

Kennedy has had several work experience placements since returning to Rotherham and is now considering an apprenticeship which is a positive outcome.

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Transitions Case Study

Person Profile

Rowan is 22 years old and has severe autism and cerebral palsy.

Rowan experiences extreme anxiety and can have behaviours that challenge. Rowan uses a wheelchair for mobility and has assistance with transfers.

Rowan also has assistance with all personal care tasks.

Person centred planning approach

Rowan was in out of authority residential educational placement during term time and with parents in Rotherham during school holidays.

Rowan had a direct payment which they used to employ a personal assistant for support during school holidays.

This enabled Rowan to undertake “ordinary life” activities and tasks like going out to socialise with people, going to the shops and generally doing things that Rowan enjoys.

Rowan has now been supported to move back to Rotherham where their family live and they have become confident to now live independently in their own property with 24 hour support via a direct payment. The Direct Payment is used for a variety of support tasks and activities throughout the day to ensure Rowan’s needs are met – these include things like accompanying Rowan to attend educational activities and volunteering opportunities. Attendance to community activities in their local area and support in the home for personal care and life skills as far as possible ie: preparation of meals and meal choices.

Rowan has also been awarded fully funded Continuing Health Care.

Case Study examples

Customers who have moved on from Traditional Services

Person Profile

Dylan has Down syndrome and a Learning Disability they attended Oaks Day Centre in Wath for over 10 years , 5 days per week.

Person centred planning approach

Throughout the work that has been undertaken as part of the modernisation work for Learning Disability Services customers have had the opportunity to engage in different activities in the community.

Dylan accessed “Social Eyes” a new community based Day Opportunity. Social Eyes are established for supporting people with Learning Disabilities and Autism and engage in existing community events and activities. The team support people to get involved in everyday activities within the local community and focus on what they can do for themselves with an emphasis on a meaningful outcome for the person.

Quotes from the customers who have transitioned to a new alternative community provision

“I LIKE MY NEW ACTIVITIES, COOKING AND SINGING IN THE BAND. I LIKE MY NEW STAFF”

“I AM SO GLAD I MOVED TO SOCIAL EYES, WE GET TO USE DIFFERENT BUILDINGS, MEET NEW FRIENDS AND TRY NEW ACTIVITIES”

“I HAVE BEEN GIVEN LOTS OF NEW OPPORTUNITIES; I AM TRYING MANY NEW THINGS, MEETING NEW PEOPLE AND BEING SUPPORTED BY NEW STAFF. I AM SO GLAD I CAME HERE”.

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Case Study examples*



Harry & Sally have been living in a shared house, with two other tenants. This arrangement had been in place for some time. In the shared house, they had their own living room space.

In this house, there was always a member of staff there. The member of staff would support Harry & Sally with the cooking, cleaning and shopping. Harry & Sally didn't carry out these tasks on their own. Harry & Sally both worked in a charity shop in the local area. Sally attends a day service.

At the end of summer 2017, they got married. The plan was always that, once they were married, they would find their own property.

Social workers helped them to identify a flat in a supported living service for them to move to. They moved in to their own flat in February 2018, there is a support provider on site to help them. They can ask for help when they need it.

This new flat means that they can have their own front door, and privacy but also support at times when they need it. Harry & Sally bought all the furniture for their new flat, even putting up flat pack furniture themselves. Harry & Sally are now doing all of their own cooking, cleaning, meal planning and food shopping. With some help from the provider, they have both learnt the bus routes that they need to use to access all their activities.

Harry is being supported to find activities in the area that they have moved to. Harry has been cooking Sunday lunch, and even making his own Yorkshire puddings. There is a pet shop in the area, and Sally would like to work there.

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Case Study examples*

Case study 1

Sam wants to live a full life and make their own choices. Their family wanted to support them with this but didn't want them to attend a traditional day service. They worked with RMBC to get a Direct Payment to support them to achieve their dreams and live a person centred life. Sam has moderate learning disabilities and has a direct payment for a number of hours a week. Sam's direct payment works really well, it is centred around the things they like and love such as Barnsley Football Club. Sam has three Direct Payment workers who support them on a weekly basis, two male and one female. Sam likes having male support as they can have some "banter".

Sam's dream was to play for Barnsley Football Club, and they now use their direct payments to support themselves to attend Barnsley Away Matches and to play for Barnsley Disability Football Team. Sam's Direct Payment workers encourage Sam to try new things, go on holiday and gain independence. Over the last three years Sam's skills have increased – through travel training and peer support from other people with learning disabilities, Sam is now able to travel independently on some bus routes before this, they had to rely on other people to take them places.

Through peer support Sam now has lots of friends and a great social life. Sam says

"I like my direct payment I get to do more things and be independent, I am also doing things I love without my mum and dad".

Case Study examples*



Case study 2

Jamie used to live in supported living, Jamie wanted a Direct Payment as it was more flexible and would give him more choices in their life. Jamie has Autism.

Jamie worked with a social worker to get a Direct Payment and now gets 10 hours of support a week. Jamie uses their direct payment for whatever they need, this can be support to shop, tidy up, socialise and go on holiday. For example, Jamie loves bowling and going to the pictures. Jamie moved from supported living and into Keyring and having a Direct payment helps them keep their independence.

Jamie says

“I get on really well with my DP worker, If I didn’t have his support I wouldn’t be able to do all of the things I can do now, I would end up board and this would affect my health”.

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Working together for change

The success of the first taster sessions has only been possible due to the concerted efforts of everyone involved. Taster trailblazers like John and Leanne, and positive, skilled Navigators like Debbie and Richard have made valuable contributions to the tasters so far and have played a key role in planning future sessions.

Day centre managers have shown real positivity and a determination to make sure people get an opportunity to try something new. Senior council managers have supported the project by helping to overcome the kind of early challenges that often come with a ground breaking programme like this. Local community groups and organisations like the Life Act drama group have also been very supportive with a willingness to help the project in any way they can combined with real tolerance as we worked through early delays and changes.